5: Bancroft H-4 (no date) 1883 Plateau

parties are yet children, and such a contract, guaranteed by an interchange of presents, is rarely broken. To give away a wife without a price is in the highest degree disgraceful to her family. Besides payment of the price, generally made for the suitor by his friends, courtship in some nations includes certain visits to the bride before marriage; and the Spokane suitor must consult both the chief and the young lady, as well as her parents; indeed the latter may herself propose if she wishes. Runaway matches are not unknown, but by the Nez Percés the woman is in such cases considered a prostitute, and the bride's parents may seize upon the man's property. Many tribes seem to require no marriage ceremony, but in others an assemblage of friends for smoking and feasting is called for on such occasions; and among the Flatheads more complicated ceremonies are mentioned, of which long lectures to the couple, baths, change of clothing, torch-light processions, and dancing form a part. In the married state the wife must do all the heavy work and drudgery, but is not otherwise ill treated, and in most tribes her rights are equally respected with those of the husband.

When there are several wives each occupies a separate lodge, or at least has a separate fire. Among the Spokanes a man marrying out of his own tribe joins that of his wife, because she can work better in a country to which she is accustomed; and in the same nation all household goods are considered as the wife's property. The man who marries the eldest daughter is entitled to all the rest, and parents make no objection to his turning off one in another's favor. Either party may dissolve the marriage at will, but property must be equitably divided, the children going with the mother. Discarded wives are often reinstated. If a Kliketat wife die soon after marriage, the husband may reclaim her price; the Nez Percé may not marry for a year after her death, but he is careful to avoid the inconvenience of this regulation by marrying just before that event. The Salish widow must remain a widow for about two years,

5: Bancroft H-4 (no date) 1883 Plateau

and then must marry agreeably to her mother-in-law's taste or forfeit her husband's property.[178] The women make faithful, obedient wives and affectionate mothers. Incontinence in either girls or married women is extremely rare, and prostitution almost unknown, being severely punished, especially among the Nez Percés. In this respect the inland tribes present a marked contrast to their coast neighbors.[179] At the first appearance of the menses the woman must retire from the sight of all,

[178] Each Okanagan 'family is ruled by the joint will or authority of the husband and wife, but more particularly by the latter.' Wives live at different camps among their relatives; one or two being constantly with the husband. Brawls constantly occur when several wives meet. The women are chaste, and attached to husband and children. At the age of fourteen or fifteen the young man pays his addresses in person to the object of his love, aged eleven or twelve. After the old folks are in bed, he goes to her wigwam, builds a fire, and if welcome the mother permits the girl to come and sit with him for a short time. These visits are several times repeated, and he finally goes in the day-time with friends and his purchase money. *Ross' Adven.*, pp. 295–302. The Spokane husband joins his wife's tribe; women are held in great respect; and much affection is shown for children. Among the Nez Percés both men and women have the power of dissolving the marriage tie at pleasure. *Wilkes' Nar.*, in *U. S. Ex. Ex.*, vol. iv., pp. 410, 475–6, 486, 495. The Coeurs d'Alêne 'have abandoned polygamy.' *Stevens*, in *Pac. R. R. Rept.*, vol. i., pp. 149, 309; *Gibbs*, in *Pac. R. R. Rept.*, vol. i., p. 406. Pend d'Oreille women less enslaved than in the mountains, but yet have much heavy work, paddle canoes, etc. Generally no marriage among savages. *De Smet, Voy.*, pp. 198–9, 210. The Nez Percés generally confine themselves to two wives, and rarely marry cousins. No wedding ceremony. *Alvord*, in *Schoolcraft's Arch.*, vol. v., p. 655. Polygamy not general on the Fraser; and unknown to Kootenais. *Cox's Adven.*, vol. ii., pp. 155, 379, vol. i., pp. 256–9. Nez Percés have abandoned polygamy. *Palmer's Jour.*, pp. 129, 56. Flathead women do everything but hunt and fight. *Ind. Life*, p. 41. Flathead women 'by no means treated as slaves, but, on the contrary, have much consideration and authority.' *Hale's Ethnog.*, in *U. S. Ex. Ex.*, vol. vi., p. 207. 'Rarely marry out of their own nation,' and do not like their women to marry whites. *Dunn's Oregon*, pp. 313–14. The Sokulk men 'are said to content themselves with a single wife, with whom.... the husband shares the labours of procuring subsistence much more than is usual among savages.' *Lewis and Clarke's Trav.*, p. 351; *Dunniway's Capt. Gray's Comp.*, p. 161; *Gray's Hist. Ogn.*, p. 171; *Tolmie and Anderson*, in *Lord's Nat.*, vol. ii., pp. 231–5; *Ind. Aff. Rept.*, 1854, p. 208; *De Smet's West. Miss.*, p. 289.

[179] The wife of a young Kootenai left him for another, whereupon he shot himself. *Ross' Fur Hunters*, vol. ii., p. 169. Among the Flatheads 'conjugal infidelity is scarcely known.' *Dunn's Oregon*, p. 311. The Sahaptins 'do not exhibit those loose feelings of carnal desire, nor appear addicted to the common customs of prostitution.' *Gass' Jour.*, p. 275. Inland tribes have a reputation for chastity, probably due to circumstances rather than to fixed principles. *Mayne's B. C.*, p. 300. Spokanes 'free from the vice of incontinence.' Among the Walla Wallas prostitution is unknown, 'and I believe no inducement would tempt them to commit a breach of chastity.' Prostitution common on the Fraser. *Cox's Adven.*, vol. i., pp. 145, 199–200. Nez Percé women remarkable for their chastity. *Alvord*, in *Schoolcraft's Arch.*, vol. v., p. 655.